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Message Text

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60
ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00 NSAE-00

TRSE-00 EB-07 /020 R

DRAFTED BY 7/17/75 EXT 28670
APPROVED BY EUR/SOV:MGARRI ON
SCA/VO:NEWMASTER (BY PHONE)
COMM/MARAD:RBOURDON (BY PHONE)
---------- 101761
P R 172250Z JUL 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, CGEN, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET SEAMEN KEPT ABOARD SHIP IN CLEVELAND

1. WHEN SOVIET SHIP VOLKHOVGAS ARRIVED AT CLEVELAND O/A JULY 14, INS LOCAL INSPECTORS EXAMINING CREW AGAIN REVERTED TO PRE-1972 PRACTICE OF INQUIRING OF EACH CREWMAN HIS COMMUNIST PARTY AFFILIATION, AND ASKED ALSO WHETHER EACH HAD CRIMINAL RECORD. MASTER AND SHIP'S OFFICERS DECLINED TO PERMIT CREWMEN TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON PARTY MEMBERSHIP, AND INS OFFICIALS DECLINED TO ADMIT CREW ASHORE. THE DISPUTE WAS PICKED UP BY UPI, AND SOVIET EMBASSY PROTESTED TO DEPARTMENT (ORALLY, AT WORKING LEVEL) OVER INS QUESTIONS ON PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND ALLEGED INS LEAK OF NEWS OF INCI-DENT TO UPI. SOVIET EMBASSY HAS STRESSED THAT NO POLITICAL QUESTIONS ARE POSED TO AMERICAN CREWMEN GOING ASHORE IN SOVIET PORTS AND SOVIETS WILL NOT PROVIDE SUCH INFORMATION IN US PORTS.

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2. INCIDENTS OF THIS SORT (WITHOUT PUBLICITY) HAVE OCCURRED

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FOUR OR FIVE TIMES OUT OF SOME 2,000 SOVIET PORT CALLS
OVER PAST THREE YEARS. WE HAVE RECOMMENDED TO INS CENTRAL
OFFICE THAT ALL LOCAL INS INSPECTORS BE ADVISED THAT THEIR
STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES CAN BE FULFILLED AND INCIDENTS
AVOIDED BY PRESUMPTION OF 212(A)(28) INELIGIBILITY OF ALL

SOVIET CREWMEN.

3. EUR/SOV TOLD SOVIET EMBASSY THAT DEPARTMENT HAD
RECOMMENDED TO INS USE OF PRESUMPTIVE INELIGIBILITY,
WHICH EMBASSY FOUND ACCEPTABLE. EUR/SOV ALSO TOLD SOVIET
EMBASSY THAT WE BELIEVE (FYI BUT CANNOT SUBSTANTIATE)
THAT MORE LIKELY GREAT LAKES SHIPPING AGENT FOR SOVIETS
RATHER THAN INS OFFICIALS LEAKED STORY TO PRESS.

4. IN EVENT SOVIETS RAISE INCIDENT WITH EMBASSY MOSCOW
OR SEEK TO RETALIATE AGAINST CREW OF US SHIP, EMBASSY
MAY DRAW ON THIS CABLE. KISSINGER

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